DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 315 329 SO 020 427

AUTHOR Nelson, Murry R.
TITLE The Social Contexts of the Committee on Social Studies Report of 1916.
PUB DATE 88
NOTE 33p.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Course Content; Course Organization; Courses; *Curriculum Design; Educational History; *History; *Policy Formation; Secondary Education; *Social Studies
IDENTIFIERS National Education Association

ABSTRACT

No work in social studies has been consistently referred to over the past 75 years as much as has "The Social Studies in Secondary Education," Bulletin No. 28 (1916) of the U.S. Bureau of Education. This volume, the "Report of the Committee on Social Studies of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education of the National Education Association," has developed a mystique of its own and inspired tones of reverence when the work is mentioned; yet, few social studies educators have read it. The recent spate of reports on history/geography in the schools places much of the blame for the woeful status of history knowledge on the erosive effect of social studies on history over the past 75 years. The reference is to the 1916 report. The "conventional wisdom" regarding this report needs to be presented and assessed in the light of today's use of that wisdom. The 1916 commission report is presented in this paper in both educational and historic contexts. From whence did the ideas for this report emerge and why? The procedures and content of the report are then examined with particular focus on the commission members and their respective ideologies. The last section looks at the commission report today, in light of the recent rash of curriculum reports and recommendations. A 19-item bibliography is included. (JB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED315329

THE SOCIAL CONTEXTS OF THE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL STUDIES REPORT OF 1916

BY

MURRY R. NELSON

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

MURRY R. NELSON

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 020 427

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"The Social Contexts of the Committee on Social Studies Report of 1916"

No work in social studies has been consistently referred to over the past 75 years as much as The Social Studies in Secondary Education, Bulletin No. 28 (1916) of the United States Bureau of Education. This volume, the Report of the Committee on Social Studies of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education of the National Education Association has developed a mystique of its own and inspired tones of reverence when the work is mentioned.

Despite this awe, it seems safe to state that few social studies educators have ever seen this slim bulletin of 63 pages and even fewer have read it. Yet the Report is viewed as seminal in the foundations of the social studies. The recent spate of reports on history/geography in the schools places much of the blame for the woeful status of history knowledge on the erosive effect on history by social studies over the past 75 years. The reference, be it indirect, is to the 1916 Report.

Even though most social studies educators have failed to read the 1916 Commission Report, many of those same educators seem to "know" what is contained within that Report and see that knowledge as foundational in the existence of the very field of social studies. Is it any wonder that social studies educators are often at a loss to clearly present the underlying precepts of their field?

What is it that is known about the 1916 Report? The so-called conventional wisdom needs to be presented and assessed in the light of today's use of that wisdom. This essay will present the 1916 Commission Report in both educational and historic contexts. From whence did the ideas for this report emerge and why? The procedures and content of the Report are then examined with particular focus on the Commission members and their respective ideologies. The last section of this piece looks at the Commission Report today in light of the recent rash of curriculum reports and recommendations. It is hoped that by scrutinizing the 1916 Commission

Report closely regarding its members, content, structure, historic and educational perspectives and impact, the reports of the past years may become more meaningful and clearly understood.

It is interesting that despite the great acknowledgement given to the ramifications of the 1916 Commission Report, few scholars have ever examined the Report closely. An exception is Michael Lybarger, whose 1981 dissertation, "Origins of the Social Studies Curriculum, 1865-1916" almost immediately became a standard in the foundational study of the social studies.

Unfortunately, rather than acting as a catalyst for more interpretive study of the Commission Report, it instead was seen by many as the ne plus ultra of this analysis. Lybarger, many felt, had "done" the Commission Report. What more should be examined regarding it? Surely this Report deserves more attention. One examination of the Constitution or even of "A Nation at Risk" hardly is enough. At the 1988 meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies, the attention given to E. D. Hirsch's Cultural Literacy and Allen Bloom's The Closing of the American Mind resulted in more papers and symposia than have ever been devoted to the 1916 Report at any NCSS meeting. Part of the reason for that is because NCSS was not created until March 3, 1921; but nevertheless, this Report has endured and generated a body of folk knowledge within and outside the field of social studies education.

What folk knowledge has been handed down regarding this Report? First is the fact that this was the first NEA Commission report after a number of American Historical Association and American Political Science Association reports. Second was the use of the term social studies, which had not been in popular use before this. Third was the curricular structure offered by the report - seventh grade would have geography, eighth and eleventh grades United States History, ninth grade would be civics, tenth grade European History, and twelfth grade a new course, Problems of Democracy. Fourth was the belief that this curriculum immediately fell into place

in America's schools, and that's what we still see today. That's it. Through the miracle of educational reductionism, the ideology and tenor of the 1916 Report has vanished, the background has been distorted and the flexible curricular structure calcified. The Commission Report deserves better. It is hoped that this work will build upon Lybarger's scholarship and stimulate more assessments of the Reports of this Commission.

The Commission Reports - Historical Background

At the time of the appointment of various committees of the National Education Association in 1913, a number of national and international issues were prominent and would have an obvious effect on the committee procedure and selection of content. The issues were often intertwined, and teasing them out may simplify their very complexities. Thus, one should not reduce these issues in the singular fashion that they are presented here. That will be done only for clarity.

First was the threat of war in Europe and the question of potential American involvement. At the time of the Committee's appointment (1913), tension was high in Europe, but war had not begun. During the two years that the Committee on the Social Studies met, the Great War began and grew to engulf most of the European continent. The factions for and against American involvement in Europe grew more vocal. Unlike World War II, there was often decided indifference toward the war in Europe among many Americans. The school curriculum had little response until the American entry into the war after the issuance of the Committee Report in 1916. Nevertheless, European affairs dominated the international section of major newspapers, and this may have had some effect on the Committee as it met from 1914 to 1916.

As Europe erupted in war, it also increased the great wave of Eastern and Southern European immigrants, most of whom came to America. These immigrants were in sharp contrast to the better educated western Europeans who had

constituted the previous great wave of emigres. Much like many Asian and South American emigres today, these Europeans not only could not read and write English, many could neither read nor write any language. Some had no access to schools because of economic reasons or legislative fiat.

Overall, these emigrants were poorer, had less access to education or proper health care, and few contacts with the franchise. Many had been discriminated against in their own "homelands" for being minorities in a larger majority-dominated society. These immigrants flooded America's shores and crowded America's large cities. The Committee was acutely aware of the "problems" generated through the arrival and settlement of these immigrants, and the Report reflects that awareness and concern.

Just as today, the arrival of new, unskilled immigrants made the exploitation of workers by business a common practice. The use in industrialization was still heavily labor intensive, and the immigrants provided the bodies for the sweatshops and factories that grew into larger corporations. The debate over child labor and subsequent child labor laws were passed at this time. Laws restricting work to a 54-hour week were also passed, and talk of a minimum wage was begun. Nevertheless, many workers were working more than 60 hours per week, children were the backbone of many industries, and industrial accidents left workers maimed or dead with no compensation.

In the urban slums, cold water flats with no toilets were common, and immigrants often were so overcrowded that diseases spread rapidly. Settlement Houses and other private social welfare agencies arose to meet the needs of this exploited underclass. Many of the members of the 1916 Committee were also members of the Municipal League, a socially concerned private organization found in cities throughout the United States.

The exploitation of workers at all levels led to the great rise in unionism from the late 1800's through the early 1900's. This struggle was fraught with death,

destruction of property, and cries of public corruption. The Haymarket Riot of 1886 was only the beginning of threats, strikes, lockouts and violent union busting activities. As active members of the Municipal League with strong social concerns, it is highly unlikely that the Committee members were not aware of the union activity, as well as the pressures to quash such activities by industrial/corporate forces.

The Commission Reports - Educational Background

Reducing the tremendous movements in American education from 1900 to 1916 to a few pages does a disservice to them all, but some should be highlighted, if only for purposes of recognition. From this milieu of concerns came many of the pressing issues that shaped the Commission on the Reorganization of SEcondary Education.

The rising tide of immigrant children had to be schooled not just for their own benefit, but for that of their parents and society generally. Knowledge of language, custom, health practices and economic consumerism would be left to the schools to provide. All of these concerns and others would be taught to these young immigrants so that they would come to understand their civic duties as both citizens and landed immigrants. The survival of "proper" civic virtue was dependent upon the school's initiative.

At the time of the Committee's existence, the finest public high schools were located in the heart of the cities. Suburbs, as they are known today, hardly existed, and smaller town high schools could or would not provide the comprehensive curriculum available in the urban centers. Even in the city school systems, fewer than 15% of the elementary students went on to high school, often under 10%. To put this into today's terms, the dropout rate ran at anywhere from 85 to 90%. Recognizing that situation meant that the Committee's recommendations for high school were for a very small percentage of students. Thus, the important concerns were really for the seventh and eighth grade or, in some places, the ninth.

This ambivalence regarding grade nine was due to the fact that the junior high school had just begun. The movement to junior highs would flower in the 1920's; and, although the Committee was hopeful of this occurring, they could not be sure.

The calls for a middle school had been prominent as early as 1892 when President Eliot of Harvard had chaired the committee of ten which had suggested the earlier introduction of high school subjects. Soon after that, such institutions appeared -- Richmond Indiana with a 6-2-4- plan in 1896, Baltimore with a 6-3-2 plan for the brightest students, Berkeley, California and Columbus, Ohio in 1908. By 1916, over 250 junior high schools had been established nationwide in cities large and small.

With the growth of junior high schools, curricular practices were altered. No longer would students leave after graduating elementary schools. Instead, in many schools grade nine would be the terminal grade and curriculum could be altered accordingly. The committee of 1916 acknowledged this, and the overall schema presented was dependent upon it. This is often overlooked and will be discussed more in the next section.

The period 1913 - 1916 was the forerunner of the great growth of Progressivism in American education following World War I. Col. Parker's ideas were furthered by Dewey and his work at the University of Chicago Laboratory School. Child-centered and society-centered factions of progressivism would emerge after the War, but in 1916, Dewey and the scientific approach to curriculum and schooling were favorably viewed by most of the school people on the Committee.

Progressivism in education seemed to fit naturally with the social progressivism of the late 1800's and the commensurate concerns with social welfare for all Americans. This concern led to more attention to "social study" in schools. Lybarger notes this concern in social scholars like James Gillette who authored "An Outline of Social Study for Elementary Schools" in the American Journal of

Sociology in 1914, and especially Franklin Giddings of Columbia, who had direct or indirect contact with almost all of the Committee members. (Lybarger, 1981, 175)

The Committee Report was the climax of over 20 years of various committee reports examining the schools and making recommendations for their curriculum. The first in 1894 was also under the aegis of the National Education Association and was known as the Committee of Ten. The subcommittee on History, Civic Government, and Political Economy was chaired by Charles Kendall Adams of the University of Wisconsin. This report, 40 pages in length, had over 30 resolutions proposed by a committee of 4 historians, 3 political scientists or political economists, and 3 school principals. This committee included Woodrow Wilson, E.G. Bourne, Jesse Macy and Albert Bushneel Hart, and sought to codify the offerings of history in school. They stated that political economy and civil government should be coordinated with history and that English and geography should be brought into close study with history. Clearly, this is the kind of thinking that led to the creation of the term and concept "social studies;" but because it did not exist as such at that time, "strict constructionists" argue for history above all.

The Committee of Ten offered two curricular sequences for history, civil government and political economy — a preferred and an alternative sequence. The preferred was an eight-year sequence beginning in grade five and carrying through grade twelve. It is shown below:

Grade 5 (referred to as grade) Biography and Mythology
Grade 6

Grade 7 American history and elements of civil government

Grade 8 Greek and Roman history with their oriental connections

Grade 9 French history

Grade 10 English history

Grade 11 American history

Grade 12 A special period to be studied intensively

The alternative six-year plan appeared as follows:

Grade 7 Biography and Mythology
Grade 8

Grade 9 American history and civil government

Grade 10 Greek and Roman history with their oriental connections

Grade 11 English history

Grade 12 American history and civil government

All study should be at least three 40-minute class periods per week for the entire school year.

This report hardly had time to be digested when another report was commissioned by the American Historical Association in 1896. This report, the Committee of Seven, was chaired by Professor Andrew C. McLaughlin of the University of Michigan. Overall, the Committee consisted of only one teacher, and this report was much more extensive than the previous committee's (1894). The volume runs over 250 pages, of which nearly half are appendices consisting of status reports on history in American secondary schools, elementary schools, German gymnasia, French Lycees, English secondary schools, and Canadian secondary schools.

This Committee recognized the work of the Committee of Ten of 1894 which had a coincidental member with the Committee of Seven (Albert Bushnell Hart), but noted that this new work was the first to provide a status study and to begin to lay "the foundations for a common understanding" (Committee of Seven, 1899, 4). The committee would make recommendations for history study in the schools, but noted that "when all is said and done, only so much will be adopted as appeals to the sense and judgment of the secondary teachers and superintendents, and that any rigid list of requirements, or any body of peremptory demands, however judiciously framed, not only would, but should, be disregarded in schools whose local conditions make it unwise to accept them" (Committee of Seven, 4-5).

The Committee presented a four years' course consisting of four blocks or periods to be studies in the order presented by the Committee. The first block was Ancient History with special reference to Greek and Roman history, but including also a short introductory study of the more ancient nations up to about the year 843 and the treaty of Verdun.

The second block would cover medieval and Modern European history from the end of the above period to present (1899).

Block three was to be English history from pre-Norman conquest to the present.

The fourth block was to be American history and civil government. In making this recommendation, the committee mentioned that American history "is given in the eighth and lower grades in probably the vast majority of schools...(Committee of Seven, 38). Thus it would be best to offer it later in high school as an advanced subject "with the purpose of getting a clear idea of the course of events in the building of the American Republic and the development of its political ideas" (Committee of Seven, 74). It was thus deemed most expeditious to teach civil government and history as one subject rather than as two distinct subjects (Committee of Seven, 81).

The concerns of the elementary schools were addressed by the American Historical Association's Committee of Eight, which was constituted in 1905 and issued its report in 1909. The committee consisted of three superintendents, two members from normal schools, two from colleges, and the chairman, James Alton James of Northwestern University. This committee began by acknowledging the work of the Committees of 1894 and 1899 and noted that a member of the latter committee, Miss Lucy M. Salmon, had also outlined a six-year course of study which was though suitable for the elementary schools of the country" (Committee of Eight, vii).

The plan, as stated by the committee, was "based on the proposition that the history teaching in the elementary schools should be focused around American

history" (Committee of Eight, x). The descriptions of the offerings of grades one through eight are as follows.

First and second grades should "give the child an impression of primitive life and an appreciation of the public holidays" (Committee of Eight, 1). They focus on Indian Life, Thanksgiving, Washington's Birthday, Local Events, and Memorial Day.

Grade three examines heroes, Columbus, Indians, Independence. Fourth grade was to deal with American explorers (i.e. explorers of North America), colonial Virginia life, colonial New England life, life in other colonies, local pioneers, Washington, New France and Franklin.

Fifth grade considered more of this, including narrative pre-revolutionary biographies; the Revolution and its heroes; the Great West; the Northwest; the New Republic and its growth; later great statesmen like Webster, Clay and Calhoun; the Civil War; and Great Industries.

Grade six would introduce American history, then study Ancient Greece and her neighbors the Romans, the later Teutons, trade between east and west including the Crusades, the age of discovery, and European rivalries of that time.

Seventh grade would deal with the exploration and settlement of North American and the growth of the colonies until the close of the French and Indian War (Committee of Eight, 48). Eighth grade would be the history of the American nation. This entire report included lists of books for every section of each grade level for teacher and children's uses. The courses were presented in chronological outlines. The committee also noted that elementary civics should permeate the entire school life of the child. They, too, recommended that "civics and history should, so far as possible, be taught as allied subjects..." (Committee of Eight, 117). However, they also felt that specific civic instruction could not be successfully accomplished prior to grade five.

In 1907 another committee was appointed by the AHA to present a report on the Study of History in Secondary schools. This Committee (of Five) issued its

report in 1911, by which time one of its members, Charles W. Mann, a professor of history at the Lewis Institute, in Chicago had died. Thus, only four members signed the report; and of those four, three, A. C. McLaughlin, now of the University of Chicago, Charles Haskins of Harvard, and James Harvey Robinson of Columbia, had been on one of the previous committee reports issued. The fourth member was James Sullivan, principal of Boys' High School in Brooklyn. The Committee of Five recognized this overlap and noted that they used the Committee of Seven report as their starting point. Thus, this new report contained both new recommendations for change and for implementing the work of the Committee of Seven.

Overall, the Committee of Five saw little to change from the recommendations of the report twelve years earlier. They felt that a substantially similar curriculum in history did exist nationally, and, with local modifications where necessary, that this was a good thing. In response, however, to a petition from the Headmasters' Association, this new Committee re-examined the block schedules of the Committee of Seven.

After much discussion, the Committee of Five proposed that the new schedule be as follows for the four years of high school:

A. Ancient History to 800 A.D. with the last 500 years to be passed over more rapidly.

B. English History to about 1760.

C. Modern European History, including introductory medieval history and English history from 1760.

D. American History and government arranged on such a basis that some time may be secured for the separate study of government. (In contrast to the recommendation of the Committee of Seven.)

From this mileau of recommendations, reports and assessments, the 1916 Committee on the Social Studies Report emerged. Shortly afterward (1921) another AHA committee (a second Committee of Eight) produced a report on history in the

schools. Much of the results of this report and subsequent discussion are to be found in issues of Historical Outlook from February to June 1921.

All of these reports were acknowledged by A. C. Krey and his Committee of the American Historical Association in a 1926 report that called for a more detailed study of history and other social studies in the schools. This led to the formation of the exhaustive multi-volume study led by Krey that was published as the Report of the Commission on the Social Studies in the 1930's. Despite the time and effort spent, this report seems to have had little effect on social studies in school or out. Thus, it becomes more intriguing to recognize the "endurance" of the 1916 report in light of so many other reports issued before and after, including ones by the American Political Science Association, American Economic Association, and the American Sociological Association.

The Report of the 1916 Committee - The Social Studies in Secondary Education

In 1912, the Committee on Articulation of High School and College of the NEA recommended the appointment of high school subject matter subcommittees, and these were appointed the next year by the NEA president at that time, Edward F. Fairchild, the president of New Hampshire College (now the University of New Hampshire). "Many people, including each State (sic) superintendent, were asked to suggest persons best qualified for this important work" (U.S. Bureau of Education, 1913, 7). The chairman was Thomas Jesse Jones, formerly of the Hampton Institute; and his statement of 1913 indicates his view of the Committee's work. He noted that "good citizenship should be the aim of social studies in the school" and that social studies should have direct responsibility for the social welfare of the community. Thus, only fact, conditions and activities that contribute to human betterment should be taught (U.S. Bureau of Education, 1913, 16-17).

It should be noted that in Clarence Kingsley's address to the NEA as chairman of the Committee on Articulation of High School and College, he asserted that:

> "...each committee has attempted to make these aims specific and to express them in terms of the effect to be produced upon the boy or girl either in the power to execute or in the ability to appreciate rather than in terms of subject matter to be mastered." (Kingsley, 1914, 483)

Thus, subject matter was to be a means to an end, and Kingsley went on to illustrate this point for various subject areas. In history, aims such as the appreciation of the development of the rights of the individual as achieved by the Anglo-Saxon were to be stressed. In civics, a point of view that would lead to cooperation with the local charity organization was preferable (Kingsley, 484).

This was consistent with Jones's statement that an aim of social studies was not exhaustive knowledge, but to see the significance of these (community) matters and to arouse a desire to know more of environment, i.e. "to think and live 'civically'" (U.S. Bureau of Education, 1913, 17).

The Committee on Social Studies had been meeting for approximately a year by the time of the 1913 bulletin. Many of their later recommendations were obvious in this earlier statement by Jones. The term "civics," for example, was defined as including "all the possible activities of the good citizen, whether as individual or with private organizations or with the government" (U.S. Bureau of Education, 1913, 18).

Before proceeding further it is appropriate to examine more closely the individuals who constituted the committee, their ideologies as best can be ascertained, and the procedures that resulted in the Committee Report of 1916. In that way the contents of the report may make greater sense, particularly when viewed against the backdrops presented earlier.

The committee was dominated, at least in published materials, by the thoughts of Thomas, Jesse Jones, and Arthur W. Dunn. Both men claimed in correspondence to have written the report (Lybarger, 1981). Jones had had a long career at the Hampton Institute before joining the Bureau of Education in 1912. There are references throughout the report to Hampton where Jones had established one of the

first programs in social studies. In Social Studies in the Hampton Curriculum (1906) reprinted from a series of articles in the Southern Workman, Jones, who later led the Phelps-Stokes Education Fund, presented the foundations for his "civic" thinking. Jones' work at Hampton was almost exclusively with blacks and Native Americans who were "totally lacking in ideals of the home, the school, the church or the state" (Jones, 1906, 2). Jones saw Negroes as inferior, but not hopeless. He believed that they might become equal if they were to develop their race through proper economics, sociology and civics. If they did, then the eventual eradication of prejudice was likely. Social studies was to provide the opportunity for the Negro and the Indian "to understand the essentials of a good home, the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, the cost and meaning of education, the place of labor and the importance of thrift." (Jones, 1906, 1).

Jones may appear to be a blatant racist with his evolutionary notions. Lybarger has shown the great influence of Franklin Giddings and his work at Columbia on the influence of climate on character. This was an underlying principle of much thought in social work at that time, and it was clearly influential in the Municipal League. In addition, however, Jones' thoughts and comments were consistent with the evolutionist writings of Lewis Henry Morgan, who envisioned human history as consisting of three major ethnical periods -- Savagery, Barbarism and Civilization -- which were passed through sequentially over many years.[1]

Jones laments the swift passage from slavery (savagery) to the demands of civilization. "The justification of this radical step is in the need of the Negro and Indian arising from the fact that they have been suddenly transferred from an earlier form of society into a later one without the necessary time of preparation." (Jones, 1906, 4). Thus, Jones pleaded for patience, moderation and time. Negroes and Indians should work hard at their own level rather than demanding more than they were capable of. Lybarger quotes Giddings as observing that, "(The Negro) still

[1] An excellent discussion of the evolutionists is found in Marvin Harris' The Rise of Anthropological Theory, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York 1968.

relapses into savagery, but kept inn contact with whites he readily takes the external impress of civilization." (Lybarger, 175). Thus, blacks should listen to whites for guidance and character, not other blacks. This paternalism may seem admirable, but it is still racism, however benign. The view was reflected in the ideas of many of the committee's members.

William Arey of the Hampton Institute had been a colleague of Jones there and had also studied sociology as a graduate student at Columbia under Franklin Giddings, as had S. B. Howe of the Committee. Lybarger observed that Kingsley had taken a course from Giddings at Columbia (Lybarger, 1981).

J. Lynn Barnard had a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and was in the School of Pedagogy in Philadelphia as a professor of history and government. The school was attached to Central High School, whose principal from 1893 to 1920 was Robert Ellis Thompson. Up until 1892, Thompson had been a professor of social science at the University of Pennsylvania where he espoused the same social Darwinist thought as Giddings (Lybarger, 1981, Chapter III).

George Bechtel, Frank Boyden, Jessie Evans and J. Herbert Low had all "attended colleges and took coursework in sociology at institutions where Giddings' textbooks are known to have been used." (Lybarger, 124). This is speculative, but still makes the influence of Giddings and other social Darwinists a real possibility.

Henry Burch was another graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and "spent three years at the School of Pedagogy, before joining the Department of History and Economics at Central High School where he taught until 1912" (Lybarger, 114), the year that the Committee was originally appointed.

F. W. Carrier, as part of the subcommittee that authored the 1915 Bulletin, "The Teaching of Community Civics" had helped gather the data for said bulletin as did Kingsley, while participating in a course taught at Hyannis (MA) for teacher of community civics. The course was taught by J. Lynn Barnard; and although <u>not</u> part of that subcommittee, Jessie Evans did provide acknowledged suggestions in its

writing. She also co-authored with Barnard two civics books based on the recommendations of the Committee on Social Studies.

Blanche Hazard, the other woman on the committee was at the High School of Practical Arts in Boston when the committee was appointed, but had joined the faculty at Cornell, which had deep roots in the social welfare movement, by the time the report was published in 1916.

William T. Morrey, a history teacher, and William A. Wheatley were among the ten committee members who were also members of the National Municipal League, according to Lybarger (Barnard, Bechtel, Branison, Burch, Carrier, Jones, Kingsley, and Dunn were the others).

William H. Mace had a Ph.D. from Jena University in Prussia and an LLD from Syracuse. At the time of the Committee's Report, he had been retired for more than ten years as a professor of history and political science.

James Harvey Robinson, the only committee member who had served on a previous committee (that of 1892-94), was one of the most respected of American historians and at the peak of his career in 1912. He had written books on various aspects of European history, including the French Revolution, the rise of Prussia, Italian city-states and western civilization.

Two of the original members of the Committee, H. M. Barrett, principal of East High School in Denver and Alexander E. Cance of Massachusetts Agricultural College (now University of Massachusetts - Amherst) left the Committee before the final report, and Bechtel, Carrier, Hamilton and Kingsley were appointed some time after the formation of the original committee.

Arthur W. Dunn, the Secretary of the Committee was also not an original committee member, but was employed as civic education specialist in the Bureau of Education. The Bureau had no specialists in secondary education (U.S. Bureau of Education, 1913, 5); but because the Municipal League paid part of Dunn's salary while he was at the Bureau, he was the exception to the above statement (Lybarger,

191). Dunn had studied sociology at the University of Chicago under Albion Small and, before coming to the Bureau, had been director of instruction and training in civics for the Indianapolis schools.

It should be clear that the National Municipal League had a great interest in the committee's work. The League was a non-partisan (though vehemently anti-Socialist) organization interested in reform through gradual and orderly change. Members of the League felt that the key to Municipal reform lay in education - first through adult social study clubs. Social studies to the Municipal League was "the simplified findings of social science and sociology whose dissemination will ameliorate the lot of unfortunate city dwellers in order to establish the necessary preconditions for Municipal reform." (Lybarger, 207).

In 1903, a League Committee on Civic Education (which included Dunn, Carrier and Barnard) had recommended that students study the present, not the past, and, if possible, the future. Despite appearances, Lybarger notes that there was "no evidence of conspiracy or desire to restrict choices available to children in American schools." (Lybarger, 265). Clearly the bulk of the Committee members had a very consonant ideology, and that will be discussed more freely below.

The Committee was appointed by the NEA president, but very few members of the Committee were NEA members. Kingsley and Jones were likely given their head to recommend appointees, and it is no surprise that the Committee was heavily weighted toward social reformers. The Committee met for three years for sessions of one or two days each and subcommittees met at other times. Jones noted in his preface that the committee had conferred with many persons not members of the committee and had met in conference with representative of the American Historical Association and the American Political Science Association.

Jones also notes in the preface a 1915 report written by a subcommittee and published as "The Teaching of Community Civics" (Bulletin 1915, No. 23). "This bulletin, which is referred to in the body of the present report, should be considered,

therefore, as an integral part of the Report of the Committee on Social Studies." (U.S. Bureau of Education, 1916, 6). That 1915 Bulletin was, as mentioned previously, developed in the summer of 1914 when Dr. Barnard conducted a course, at the invitation of the Massachusetts Board of Education, for teachers of community civics. The sentiments of the Commission of Education were consonant with the subcommittee that prepared the report. The Commission, P. P. Claxton noted:

> "For good citizenship men and women must not only have good will, but an abiding interest in the welfare of the community. They must also have a working knowledge of social agencies, good judgment as to methods of social activities, and a more or less comprehensive understanding of fundamental principles of social life and progress." (U.S. Bureau of Education, 1915, No. 23, 5)

This bulletin was divided into three parts, the latter being bibliographical suggestions. Part I was "Aims and Methods in Teaching Community Civics." The good citizen was defined as "a person who habitually conducts himself with proper regard for the welfare of the communities of which he is a member, and who is active and intelligent in his cooperation with his fellow members to that end." (Bulletin, 1915, No. 23, 9). Stages in developing good citizenship were described and community civics defined and described. Since these duplicate the statements of the 1916 Bulletin, they will not be given here. Eleven elements of welfare for study were listed in part I and described more fully in part II. These elements were the same given in the chairman's statement of 1913 and the final report of 1916. There were minor modifications, but the essence of this report was given in 1913 and developed in the subsequent reports of 1915 and 1916. The key elements of welfare for study were health,protection of life and property, recreation, education, civic beauty, wealth, communication, transportation, migration, charities, correction.

The body of the 1916 Report begins on page 9 with a definition of social studies as "those whose subject matter relates directly to the organization and development of human society, and to man as a member of social groups."

(Bulletin, 196, 9). The aims of social studies were social efficiency, the cultivation of good citizenship, including loyalty to high national ideals. The Committee was, it stated, more interested in "socialization" than the number of social studies offered or the number of hours for each.

One of the most important statements in the introduction noted that,

> The Committee has refrained from offering detailed outlines of courses, on the ground that they tend to fix instruction in stereotyped forms inconsistent with a real socializing purpose. The selection of topics and the organization of subject matter should be determined in each case by immediate needs. (Bulletin, 1916, 10)

The Committee went on to illustrate the importance of teachers' independent selections of data with a quote from Bulletin, No. 17 "Civic Education in Elementary Schools as Illustrated in Indianapolis" by Arthur W. Dunn.

Lest one believe that the social reformist bent of the Committee made it solely social reconstructionist in philosophy, the Committee's next concern clearly belies that. They noted that the high school course had been determined too largely by supposed future needs and called for more emphasis on present needs and past experience.

The next concern of the committee was curricular continuity, which was in some disarray with the advent of the junior high school. They noted that secondary education must now include grades seven and eight. As mentioned earlier, the junior high school plan flowered in the 1920's. One early rationale for junior highs and a 6-3-3 alignment was to keep students a year longer and school them in better citizenship (Briggs, 1920).

The committee explained what it called the "cycle" plan of organization -- two three-year cycles preceded by an earlier six-year cycle -- as coinciding roughly with the physiological periods of adolescence, but was "based chiefly upon the practical consideration that large numbers of children complete their schooling with the sixth grade and another large contingent with the eight and ninth grades." (Bulletin, 1916, 12). This is a vital component of the Report easily ignored by later eulogists of it.

The Report recognized a very real problem of early school leaving. Statistical data and many cultural anecdotes of the time illustrate the vividness of this "problem." The Committee of 1916 essentially reduced the vital content of social studies to European history, geography, American history and civics. They did not believe that a "double dose" of them was the answer for all. They also recognized the shallowness required to make them understandable to all in grades 7-9. The Committee thought civics was necessary in both eighth and ninth grade, not only if many schools remained on an 8-4 organization,but to provide the pupil with a "motivation for the continuation of his education" (Bulletin, 1916, 14). If the percentage of students going on to high school (because of stricter compulsory attendance regulations) had approached what is true today, it seems obvious that the Committee would have taken a different turn. What that might have been would be merely speculative, but that will be discussed in the next section of this essay. The Committee also recognized the societal needs impacting upon the school, and to some extent, bought into the industrial model of schooling. They note that non-native or native children might need more or less American or European history. However, "In both European and American history the selection of topics for emphasis should, within certain limits at least, be made to meet industrial or other specific needs," (Bulletin, 1916, 13) including local or current circumstances.

Part II of the Commission Report presented the seventh, eight and ninth grade curriculum with more discussion and examples. A number of combinations were offered for one-half or whole year coursework, all involving European history, geography, civics and American history. A number of admirable references to the Indianapolis program (developed by Dunn) are made.

In addition, a discussion of <u>sixth</u> grade geography work is included to show the continuity of method from elementary to secondary schooling. According to the Committee, sixth grade geography was to be Africa and South America in the first half of the year and the United States in the second half. Sixth grade history

roughly paralleled this. This is interesting, because these "observations" of sixth (and fifth grade) seem to have no basis in previous recommendations or cited status research.

The overall rationale for history offerings in grades seven and eight is taken from Dewey's notions of relating study to the child's world. "No history, therefore, should be treated as though it had meaning or value in itself, but should constantly be made to show its relation or contribution to the present" (Bulletin, 1916, 21). The close coordination of American history with community civics was intentional and reflected the earlier "elements of welfare" mentioned in Jones' work, the 1913 Bulletin statement, and the 1915 Bulletin on Civics by the subcommittee led by Barnard. These elements were listed on page 18, but three additional topics appear in the 1916 Bulletin and focus on community agencies -- 12) How governmental agencies are conducted; 13) How governmental agencies are financed; 14) How voluntary agencies are conducted and financed.

The Committee, while seemingly sympathetic to the War in Europe, seemed to take a more isolationist view of the curriculum by referring to "internationalism" as sometimes having a tendency to undermine "our" sense of the importance of National solidarity. World community was fine in its place, but first "there must be efficient and self-respecting nationalism" (Bulletin, 1916, 26). The Committee did go on to concede the increasing state of world interdependence and need for world understanding. That was to be fostered through community civics.

The section, civic relations of vocational life, was probably most reflective of Jones and the Hampton curriculum.

> The chief purpose of the phase of the ninth-year work now being emphasized should be the development of an appreciation of the social significance of all work;...of the necessity for social control, governmental and otherwise, of the economic activities of the community...(Bulletin, 1916, 27).

Superintendent Wheatley's work (a committee member) in Middletown (CT) was then described and lauded. Other examples were also given to coincide with a number of the elements of welfare.

Part III described the work for grades 10-12. The general outline was one year of European history to the end of the seventeenth century; one or one-half year of European history, including English history, since the end of the seventeenth century; one or one-half year of American history and one or one-half year of the problems of American democracy. This is the cycle repeated from grade seven to nine. The decision as to which course is most appropriate for each student was addressed by the Committee. "(I)t would seem desirable for the pupil, whose time in the last three years is limited, to take those social studies which would most directly aid him to understand the relations of his own social life." (Bulletin, 1916, 35). The equal amount of time given to pre-seventeenth and to recent history was noted by the committee whose members were convinced that "recent history is richer in suitable materials for secondary education than the more remote periods, and is worthy of more intensive study." (Bulletin, 1916, 36).

As to course organization, the Committee subscribed to a topical or problem method, as opposed to a method based on chronological sequence alone and felt those problems should be selected with the pupil's immediate interest and general social significance in mind (Bulletin, 1916, 37). Of particular concern would be the aforementioned elements of welfare.

In considering principles underling history instruction, the Committee stated that "the historical training acquired by the pupils is not proportional to the number of courses offered. The Committee struggled with this and with different approaches to history, but found no substitute for the chronological organization of history adequately meeting the needs and conditions of secondary education (Bulletin, 1916, 48). But rather than a comprehensive overview, the Committee considered one year of school work on one historical epoch, permitting the teacher

free choice within these limits. This sounds similar to the "special period" studied intensively in grade twelve recommended by the Committee of Ten in 1894.

To the Committee of 1916, the Problems of American Democracy course might also be seen as appropriate for intensive study. The Committee was responding to the demands of economists and sociologists and the perceived needs of high school students in proposing this course, which in its content of issues would vary from year to year and class to class.

Illustrations for the course were given, drawn in part from Jones' work at Hampton Institute. The Committee noted that they could find "no better illustration of the organization of economic and sociological knowledge on a problem basis...than that offered in the work of this institution" (Hampton). (Bulletin, 1916, 55-56). Because of the innovative nature of this proposed course, the committee urged experiment in the content of this course using the principles applied to community civics (i.e., the elements of welfare).

Part IV of the Report dealt with teacher preparation and relied upon standards proposed previously by Dunn to test the value of civics instruction. These included the pupil's present interest as a citizen, motives for studying civics, stimulation of cooperation among pupils, cultivation of judgment and initiative in civic situations and subject matter organized on the basis of the pupil's past experiences, immediate interests, and needs of his present growth.

While offering few suggestions for improvement, the Committee did note that "the greatest obstacle to the vitalization of the social studies is the lack of preparation on the part of teachers (Bulletin, 1916, 58). The next greatest was the lack of suitable textbooks.

The Committee was less concerned about textbooks because they were confident of the future fluidness of the social studies curriculum, precluding the use of the same text each year. History and social science instruction would "vary...from term to term from class to class and even from pupil to pupil. The

future textbook will accordingly be less and less a compendium of information and more and more a manual of method and illustrated material...(Bulletin, 1916, 62).

Textbooks might be abandoned, and that was seen as a wholesome development, within reason, as was the development of local materials. These can be boring and useless, however, and rarely "constitute suitable textbooks or adequate substitutes for them" (Bulletin, 1916, 63).

On this note the Committee Report ends.

Analyzing the 1916 Report and Its Use Today

Barr, Barth and Shermis have noted the tremendous, unanticipated impact that the 1916 Report had on the public schools.

> The primary effect seems to have been to establish a certain organization of courses, paradoxically the very part of the report not recommended for universal use. The call for developing unique curriculum suited for local use seems to have ben ignored, as was the integration of history and civics, and the use of topics or problems as a basis for course structure. (Barr, Barth and Shemis, 27).

Briggs found in 1920 that history, geography and civics were the offerings basically in grades seven, eight and nine. Five years later Wilson found similar patterns, as did others through the thirties and forties. The patterns observed, however, as Barr, Barth and Shermis noted, were the courses <u>not</u> recommended for universal use. Thus began a mythology persistent today of the course recommendations as the key to the 1916 Report. A continued view of social studies as social science coursework persisted based, at least in part, on an erroneous (or non) reading of the 1916 Report. The writers of the Committee Report were far more flexible than the misinterpretations of the report would imply; but, as noted, these Committee members did have strong ideological biases and that report as well as others should be read with an eye for scrutinizing closely the biases of the authors.

The 1916 Report began in a way different from the previous AHA reports, that is by failing to note any previous work done by others in the area. Each AHA Report acknowledged previous AHA work as well as the NEA Committee of 1894 and, sometimes, the American Sociological Society or American Political Science Association reports. But the members of the 1916 Report chose not to do this. Even if some members were unfamiliar with previous reports, the committee collectively could not have been. After all, Robinson had been on the Committee of Ten in 1892, and he was actively involved with the AHA.

This lack of credit may seem trivial, but I see it as sending two or three messages. First, the Committee could have been saying that it felt the previous reports were worthless and would not give them credit. Second, the Committee might have been concerned that the NEA, not the AHA or other social science groups, should be the body to make statements of curriculum policy and not matter what was in previous AHA Reports, the Committee simply would not acknowledge it. It might also have been that Dunn and/or Jones, in writing the report, had failed to draw enough on the Committee members' expertise, and simply weren't familiar enough with what the previous AHA reports had to say.

Despite the flexibility, the Committee felt history could not simply stand on its won as the AHA committees had. History, too, had to answer the test of good citizenship. As Jones noted in 1913, "recent history is more important than ancient; our own than that of foreign lands; labors and plans of the multitudes more than the pleasures and dreams of the few." (U.S. Bureau of Education, 1913, 18). Economic concepts would provide the students with clearer understandings of the citizen's role in a socially responsive democracy.

> The student should, at the end of the course, be in a position to see just what social workers, single taxers, socialists or organized labor advocates and government regulation enthusiasts are trying to accomplish. The ideal of individual and social welfare will in the manner be impressed upon his mind and serve as an inspiration for his life work. (Bulletin, 1913, 26).

The Committee of 1916 believed in what we refer to as social Darwinism. Natural selection played a strong part in societies' successes as well as the success of individuals or groups within a society. Change was slow, yet generally accretive. Success came by knowing your place in the social order and slowly working to improve it. Education was the key to municipal and, generally, social reform. One would profit by studying the functions of government where one's impact might be felt. Thus, city, not national, government study was most important.

The Committee members, as Lybarger observed, were strongly opposed to socialism. They saw nothing wrong with the system as designed; it was practice which was often corrupt, and education would highlight this. I am convinced that in today's curriculum, many of the Committee members would support free enterprise education and that sort of economic education.

Lybarger has observed that many Committee members saw the need first for order in the school in order to insure the safety of the Republic (Lybarger, 253). He also noted that,

> Obedience, patience, punctuality and hope, etc., considered as the virtues of citizenship and embodied in school curricula, mean that educators view the good citizen as "obedient...' But citizenship in a democratic republic may require other virtues. For example, the good citizen in 1916-17, might have needed to evaluate the way in which the United States was becoming involved in World War I...
>
> Had members of the Committee on Social Studies understood citizenship in other ways, they might have modified or changed their list of civic virtues. The Social Studies in Secondary Education might have read: 'The good citizen is not only obedient, helpful and courteous, but also is intelligent, assertive and critical (Lybarger, 83).

Thus, early on social studies "were drained of critical content in order to pursue the piecemeal improvement of social, economic and political conditions while at the same time obscuring the causes of poor conditions" (Lybarger, 299).

As Barr, Barth and Shermis noted, the reverence to the mistaken notions of what the 1916 Report said endure. This, despite more extensive reports that followed. (It should be noted that of the spate of reports issued between 1895 and

1935, the two most flexible and shortest were the NEA Reports of 1894 and 1916, and these have become the most referred to for what they supposedly said.) The National Society for the Study of Education's Yearbook (Part II) of 1923 was devoted to the social studies and examined many experiments in curricular offerings. The American Political Science Association's report of 1916 referred to and supported much of the NEA Report of 1916. The tremendous AHA undertaking, the study of the Social Studies in the Schools, first proposed in 1926 and completed ten years later, seems to have been universally ignored by social scientists and educators. Yet the "romance" of the 1916 Report endures.

The parallels between 1916 and today are worth noting and discussing. Then, as now, we have increasing concern with immigration, only this time the immigrants come not from Europe, but Latin America and East Asia. English only regulations of the early 1900's have become the more sophisticated "English as official language laws" of the 1980's.

The new immigrants are putting an added strain on already pressed social services, including the schools. In addition, there are those who see American life as "we" know it threatened by minorities becoming the majority, as will be the case by the year 2000 in California. Schools are being looked to once again to "properly" Americanize these new youngsters.

The dropout rate among minorities is over 25%, maybe as much as 50%, depending on measures used. The overall dropout rate is of pressing concern, and the social studies curriculum needs to be restructured by local districts with this in mind. Many studies of dropouts have indicated that the curriculum is part of the reason students drop out, rather than part of the solution to preventing dropping out. (Nelson, 1987).

A related concern to dropping out is drugs. Many students drop out who have become drug users. Drugs are clearly a factor in dropout, and the major factor in the dramatic increase in violent crime incidents nationwide.

The United States has become in the 1980's the leading debtor nation in the world. Can schools continue to ignore such things in their social studies curriculums?

The spate of new reports and studies in the past six years -- What Our 17-Year Olds Know; "Madison High School;" The Bradley Commission's, "Building a History Curriculum"; Bloom's Closing of the American Mind, Hirsch's Cultural Literacy and the National Commission on Social Studies in the Schools -- constitute a period in social studies education that is much like the early twentieth century when reports were issued with regularity.

It is difficult to assess and keep track of today's reports, and the Report of 1916 can be helpful in that process. The recommendations of 1916 that are most useful should be borrowed, but viewed in context. Social studies curriculum can and should be flexible and teacher developed. A truly independent curriculum that is not like all others would seem to have much to be considered by teacher-curriculum developers.

Returning to some previous notions of history or social studies curriculum which are "traditional" is foolish without keeping in mind that another century of history has transpired while efforts to institutionalize the history up to 1916 go on. The Bradley Commission report laments the demise of the "common democratic curriculum" of 1892 (Bradley Commission, 1). Their recommendations reflect the strong history base of the members of the commission. Though many of their themes seem broader in scope, the strong ideological notion of history for the sake of history contrasts sharply with some other reports and reflects the earlier concerns of AHA reports.

Just as this essay sought to present a sociology of knowledge approach to the 1916 Report, so should today's reports be scrutinized. Who are the folks writing these reports, and who is appointing them? What constituencies do they represent and what ideologies do they seek to put forth?

As Lybarger noted, there is no reason to believe that the report writers of 1916 were conspiratorial or meant to restrict choices available to children in American schools (Lybarger, 25). Similarly, there is no evidence that any of today's report writers have such notions in mind. It behooves educators to know, however, much more about the experts who put forth recommendations for the social studies curriculum and the schools.

All of the reports issued so far, and, I am sure, future recommendations of the National Commission on Social Studies in the schools, have strong ideological underpinings. That is a strength of the character of the reports. . Those ideologies are often ignored in accepting reports at face value. In order to fully understand and appreciate the "new" reports, members of the field of social studies must be facile with their own foundations and ideological biases. It is hoped that this essay fosters that process.

References

American Historical Association (Committee of Seven). The Study of History in Schools. New York, the Macmillan Co., 1899.

American Historical Association (Committee of Eight). The Study of History in the Elementary Schools. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910.

American Historical Association (Committee of Five). The Study of History in Schools. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1912.

American Historical Association. History and Other Social Studies in the Schools. December, 1926.

APSA Committee on Instruction. The Teaching of Government. New York, The MacMillan Co., 1916.

Barr, R.D., J. L. Barth and S. S. Shermis. Defining the Social Studies. Arlington, VA, National Council for the Social Studies, 1977.

Briggs, T. H. The Junior High School, Boston, Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1920.

Cremin, L. A. The Transformation of the School. New York, Random House, 1961.

Harris, M. The Rise of Anthropological Theory. T. Y. Crowell and Co., New York, 1968.

Jones, T. J. Social Studies in the Hampton Curriculum. Hampton, VA, Hampton Institute Press, 1906.

Kingsley, C. "Problems Confronting the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education." National Education Association Addresses and Proceedings, St. Paul, MN, 1914.

National Education Association. Report of the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies, American Book Co., New York, 1894.

Nelson, M. R. "Issues of Access to Knowledge: Dropping Out of School" in Critical Issues in Curriculum, 87th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, Laurel N. Tanner, Editor, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1988.

Report of Commission on the Social Studies. Conclusions and Recommendations of the Commission. New York, Charles Scribner's SOns, 1934.

U.S. Bureau of Education, Bulletin 1913 No. 41. "Preliminary Statement by Chairmen of Committees of the Commission of the National Education Association on the Reorganization of Secondary Education." Washington, GPO, 1913.

U.S. Bureau of Education, Bulletin No. 17. "Civic Education in Elementary Schools as Illustrated in Indianapolis" by Arthur W. Dunn, Washington, GPO, 1915.

U.S. Bureau of Education Bulletin No. 23. "The Teaching of Community Civics." Washington, GPO, 1915.

U.S. Bureau of Education, Bulletin 1916, No. 28, "The Social Studies in Secondary Education." Washington GPO 1916.

Wilson, H. E. "Current Curricular Experimentation in the Junior High School." Historical Outlook. December, 1929.